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A Muslim's Guide to

Energy & Climate Change

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An Introduction to *Energy & Climate Change*

Energy is a blessing from Allah (swt) which we quite often take for granted.

All life on this planet is sustained by energy from the sun. Plants and animals can store energy and some of this energy remains with them when they die. It is the remains of these ancient animals and plants that make up fossil fuels.

*“Did We not build seven
strong heavens above
you and make (the sun)
a blazing torch”*

Surah An Naba
(The Tidings) 78:12-13



Today, we use unprecedented amounts of energy and substantial portions of it are produced from fossil fuels (e.g. coal, oil and gas) that are non-renewable.

Almost everything we see around us requires energy. In fact, everything that happens in the world uses energy of one kind or another.

Most of the time we can't see it, yet it is everywhere around us. Walking, cycling, cooking food, revving car engines all use energy, hot drinks hold energy, street lights that shine at night are using energy, even reading this document is using energy.

The Quran refers to energy in the following ayah:

“ Consider the fire you kindle: is it you who makes the wood for it grow or We?”

Surah Al Waqi'ah (*The Inevitable*) 56:71-72

Allah (swt) is reminding us that He provides us with the energy we require for our sustenance. It is important that we reflect on how we use the blessings that He has bestowed upon us



Types of Energy

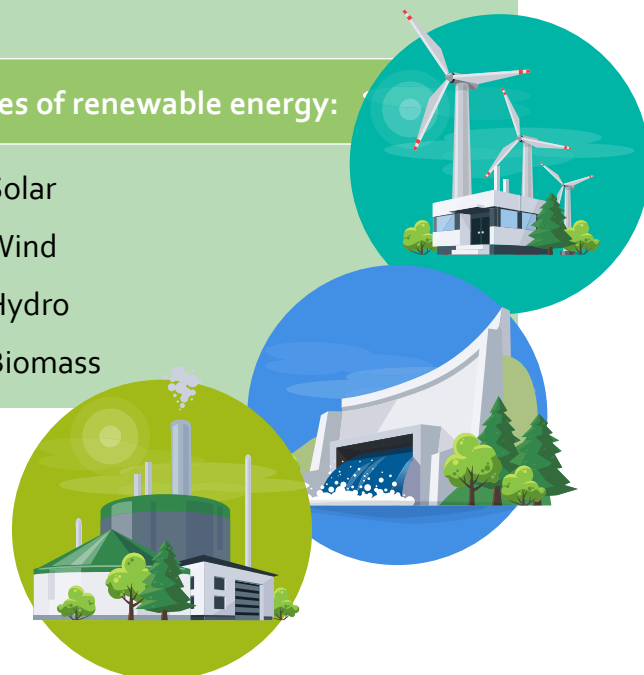
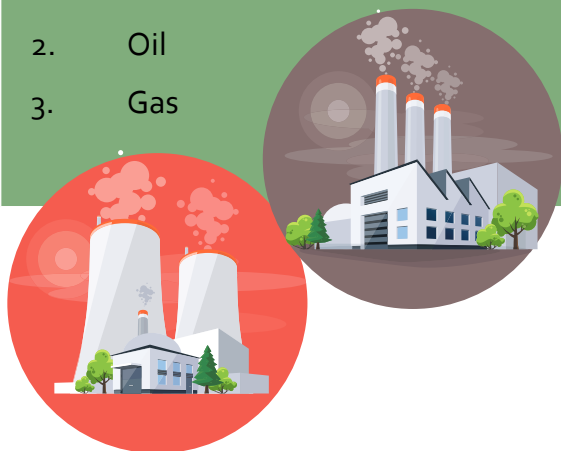
Fossil fuel energy is from below the ground and is non-renewable meaning that it will run out one day. Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse gases which is the leading cause for climate change.

Renewable energy is generated from above ground and can quickly replenish itself meaning it can be used again and again without causing damage to our planet. It has never been as important as it is now the need to find more renewable, sustainable ways of generating energy.



Fossil Fuel Energy	Renewable Energy
<p>Fossil fuels release heat energy when they are burned. They are fossil fuels because they were formed from the remains of living organisms millions of years ago.</p> <p>Fossil fuels release carbon dioxide when they burn, which contributes to climate change increasing global warming.</p>	<p>Renewable sources can be used again and again and should not run out.</p> <p>Energy from a renewable source is either carbon neutral or does not produce greenhouse gasses, therefore making it less harmful to our environment.</p>

Examples of Fossil Fuel Energy	Examples of renewable energy:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coal 2. Oil 3. Gas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solar 2. Wind 3. Hydro 4. Biomass



Household Energy

The amount of energy we use in our homes mainly depends on the climate where we live and the types and number of energy consuming devices we use. Most energy used at home is for space heating, electronics, lighting, water heating, air conditioning and refrigeration.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) lived a very low energy lifestyle, avoiding any kind of excess and maintaining the natural balance of the earth. Syeda Aisha (ra) narrates:

“A complete month would pass by during which we would not make a fire (for cooking), and our food used to be only dates and water unless we were given a present of some meat”

Hadith - Sahih Bukhari'

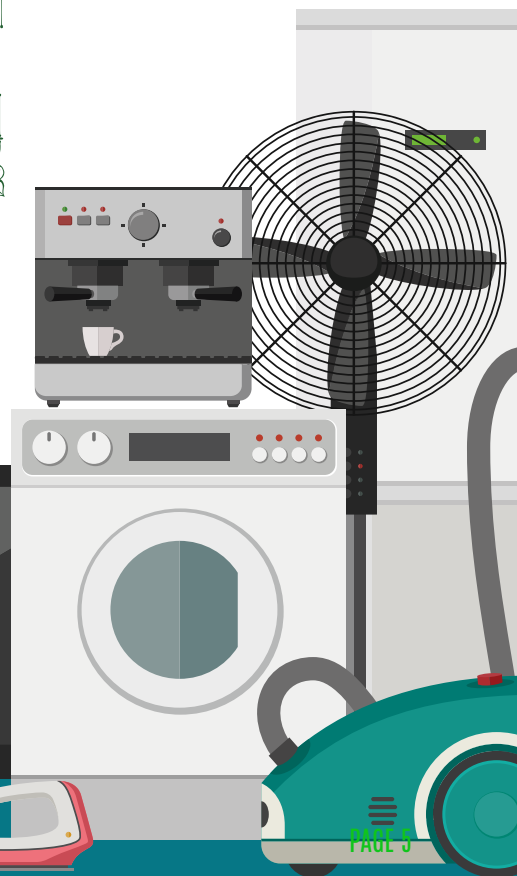
He encouraged eating raw fruit and vegetables and the Quran encourages eating food grown in their respective season:

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said

“...Eat of their fruit in their season”

(Quran 6:141)

Scholars state that the wisdom of this ayah clearly reduces the energy footprint required to preserve and to transport food/fruit grown in other parts of the world.



How Can You Help Save Energy at Home

1. Adjust your day-to-day behaviours

To reduce energy consumption in your home, you do not necessarily need to go out and purchase energy efficient products. Energy conservation can be as simple as turning off lights or appliances when you do not need them. Use energy-intensive appliances less by performing household tasks manually, such as hang-drying your clothes instead of putting them in the dryer or washing dishes by hand.

2. Switch to energy efficient appliances

On average, appliances are responsible for a large proportion of your total household energy use. Next time you need to buy a new appliance, look for one that is energy efficient, it will use less electricity, is better for the environment and will save you money too.

3. Switch to renewable energy suppliers

Green energy is fast becoming an increasingly popular option amongst households in the UK. Renewable energy supplier provides customers with 100% renewable electricity from solar, wind and hydro powered sources

4. Switch off appliances at home (not just on standby mode)

According to uSwitch, 98% of households leave the TV on standby for over 11 hours every day, costing £23.8million annually. Standby mode is one of the main culprits for wasting energy. If you have multiple television sets and other appliances at home, this uses up excess energy and can add up in cost.

5. Keep lights switched off

Only use when required – try to use natural lighting from windows in order to minimise the amount of energy used.

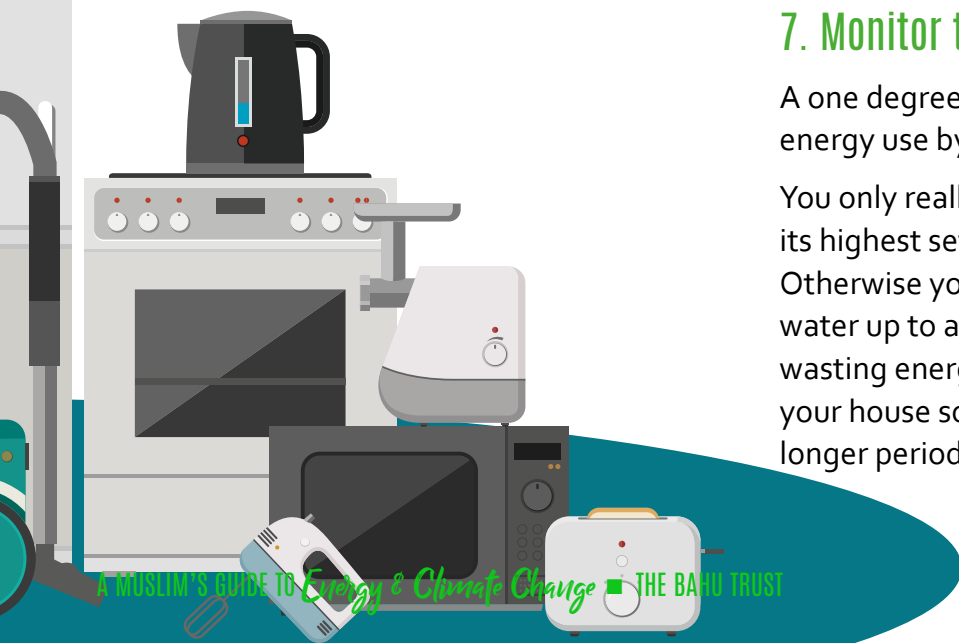
6. Use a fan instead of air conditioning

ACs are energy and money-hungry. They consume more energy to provide space cooling, thereby burning more and more fossil fuel every day. According to some reports, the increase of air conditioning usage is contributing to the rise of global temperature significantly. Use a fan or natural ventilation to keep cool and if air conditioning is necessary then use sparingly.

7. Monitor the heating at home

A one degree increase in temperature increases energy use by 6-10%

You only really need to have your boiler on its highest setting in the very cold winters. Otherwise your boiler is needlessly heating water up to a very high temperature and wasting energy. Also look at ways of insulating your house so that your home stays warmer for longer periods of time.



Campaigning For Renewable Energy

We all need to take responsibility for the way we use energy and it is important to take action in our own lives. Many of us contribute towards climate change and so we all hold some responsibility, and some power. However, individual action is not enough on its own, many of the solutions we have talked about before require local and national government infrastructures and support. Climate change is a systemic global issue and we need collective action by our government and councils to take a lead role in tackling climate change.

Consider getting involved in campaigning for renewable and sustainable consumption of energy:

- Campaign to make our energy 100% renewable
- Join a local environmental campaigning group in your area
- Dedicate your social media to educating others and to make a call for action

Even though the scale of climate change can seem overwhelming, there are lots of reasons for hope. Individuals and community groups around the world are taking a stance – from school children going on strike, to building our own clean, affordable community energy systems, passing climate emergency council motions and generally creating greener, fairer communities. For the sake of Allah (swt) and His Messenger, we can all come together and force our leaders to create the big systemic changes that we need.

“
...and whatever good you do,
Allah knows it”

Surah Al Baqarah (The Cow) 2:197

“Whoever sees an injustice, he must change it with his hand. If he is not able to do so, then he must change it with his tongue. And if he is not able to do that, then he must feel it within his heart. But that is the least of his faith”

Hadith - Sahih Muslim





For further information, please visit
Bahutrust.org/environment

